

CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. In a computing environment, a method for implementing an association
 2 among a first data object and a second data object comprising the steps of:
 3 forming a first association fragment which comprises information relevant to
 4 accessing the first data object; and
 5 forming a second association fragment which comprises information relevant
 6 to accessing the second data object, wherein the first association fragment and second
 7 association fragment cooperate to cause an association to be effectively formed
 8 between the first data object and the second data object.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the first association part and second associate
 2 part are maintained in the computing environment as data objects apart from, and in
 3 like manner as peers to, the first data object and the second data object.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the first data object and second data object are
 2 maintained by separate processes in the computing environment.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the first data object and second data object are
 2 maintained in separate data stores.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the first association fragment is maintained
 2 substantially in proximity to the first data object to facilitate the interaction
 3 therebetween, and wherein the second association fragment is maintained
 4 substantially in proximity to the second data object to facilitate the interaction
 5 therebetween.

Add A_5